

Music at Convocation Hall

Music at Convocation Hall I

**Martin Riseley, violin
Colin Ryan, violoncello
William Eddins, piano**

Saturday, April 22, 2006

7:15 pm *Pre-Concert Introduction*

by **Alexandra Munn**

Main floor, Convocation Hall

8:00 pm *Concert*



**Convocation Arts Building
Hall University of Alberta**



**UNIVERSITY OF
ALBERTA**

Program

Trio in C Minor for Piano, Violin,
and Violoncello, Op. 101 (1886)

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Allegro energico
Presto non assai
Andante grazioso
Allegro molto

Miniatures for Violin, Cello
and Piano, H. 87-89 (1906-1907)

Frank Bridge
(1879-1941)

Valse Russe
Allegretto
Hornpipe

Three Preludes (1926)

George Gershwin
(1898-1937)

Intermission

Trio in D Major for Piano, Violin, and Violoncello,
Op. 70, No. 1, "Die Geist" (1808)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Allegro vivace e con brio
Largo assai ed espressivo
Presto



CBC Radio Two is proud to share tonight's performance with the rest of Canada through broadcasts on three shows: *In Performance* with host Andrew Craig (Monday through Friday at 8:00PM), *Studio Sparks* with host Eric Friesen (weekdays at noon), and *Our Music* with host Catherine McClelland (Sundays at noon). You can listen to all these programs on CBC Radio Two, 90.9 FM in Edmonton.

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Program Notes

By Niyati Dhokai

Johannes Brahms

b. Hamburg, 7 May 1833

d. Vienna, 3 April 1897

Trio in C Minor for Piano, Violin and Violoncello, Op. 101 (1886)

Allegro energico

Presto non assai

Andante grazioso

Allegro molto

Brahms wrote this trio during the summer of 1886, which he spent at Hofstetten on Lake Thun in Switzerland. It is the last trio that Brahms wrote for violin, cello and piano. Although the *Trio in C Minor* consists of four movements, it is one of the shortest chamber works that Brahms wrote, therefore it is considered to be his most concise work.

The *Allegro energico* begins with an energizing triplet rhythm that propels the movement and creates a sense of tension, which is relieved by the *cantando* section, before returning to the original theme. The second movement, *Presto non assai*, features interplay, between the strings and the piano, where the strings echo the piano part, as well as a section where the strings play pizzicato above the staccato piano. Many meter changes occur during the *Andante grazioso*, resulting a rhythmically complex movement. The *Allegro molto* returns to the mood and tonality of the first movement, though the movement ends in the tonic major.

Frank Bridge

b. Brighton, England, 26 February 1879

d. Eastbourne, England, 10 January 1941

Miniatures for Violin, Cello and Piano, H. 87-89 (1906 – 1907)

Frank Bridge studied composition at the Royal College of Music in London from 1899 – 1903. He often performed violin and viola in chamber music groups, as well as conducted, before he received patronage to compose from Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge. Bridge also privately tutored composition; his most famous composition student was Benjamin Britten.

The *Miniatures* are relatively simple chamber pieces that Bridge composed for two sisters that were friends of his. These compositions are known for the vivid personality that they convey. The pieces are often played by introductory-level chamber musicians, because the intelligent composition style allows for the players to feel technically secure enough to explore the creative elements of chamber music performance. Bridge composed expressive chamber music during a time when it was believed that only large orchestras were capable of expressing powerful emotions.

George Gershwin

b. Brooklyn, New York, 26 September 1898

d. Hollywood, 11 July 1937

Three Preludes (1926)

George Gershwin was born Jacob Gershowitz to Russian Jewish immigrant parents in 1898. His music was influenced by French composers of the early twentieth century, as well as the works of Shostakovich, Stravinsky, and Schoenberg. During his prolific career, Gershwin composed Broadway music, where he often collaborated with his brother Ira, as well as music for the classical concert hall. The popular songs that Gershwin composed have been recorded by very well-known singers and musicians, such as Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, and Nina Simone. Gershwin is considered to have bridged the gap between classical and popular music through his innovative compositional technique that utilized jazz, Romanticism, and French composition styles.

The *Three Preludes* are the only solo works that Gershwin composed for concert piano. They were premiered by the composer at a joint recital, with contralto Marguerite d'Alvarez, in New York City on December 4, 1926. The *Three Preludes* are described as jazz-oriented, classical dances and songs. The first prelude begins with a blue-note riff, which serves as the thematic foundation for the prelude. Containing a soothing melody, the second prelude is often described as resembling a lullaby. The third prelude blends syncopated rhythms with jazz harmonies; it is referred to as the "Spanish Prelude."

Ludwig van Beethoven

b. Bonn, baptized 17 December 1770

d. Vienna, 26 March 1827

Trio in D Major for Piano, Violin and Violoncello, Op. 70, No. 1, "Die Geist" (1808)

Beethoven composed the *Trio in D Major* in Vienna during the fall of 1808, while he lived at the home of his friend, the Hungarian countess, Anna Maria von Erdödy. The composition is dedicated to the Countess, and it was premiered at her salon on December 5, 1808 with Beethoven performing the piano part.

Characteristic of the works composed during Beethoven's "middle period," the *Trio in D Major* expresses despair and optimism, which is widely believed to express Beethoven's grief over his impending deafness and his relief at being able to continue making music. The first movement features interplay between two motifs. The second movement, known as the "Ghost" movement, is eerie and suspenseful. The final movement breaks the tension of the second movement and ends the composition with a relatively cheery conclusion.

Martin Riseley has been Concertmaster of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra since November, 1994. A native of New Zealand, Mr Riseley began receiving attention at a young age, winning the prestigious \$30,000 first prize in the Television New Zealand Young Musicians' Competition.

He has been a regular soloist with the Edmonton Symphony, as well as orchestras in New Zealand, the United States and Mexico. Along with cellist Tanya Prochazka and pianist Stéphane Lemelin, Mr Riseley is a member of the Ménage à Trio, which regularly sells out its Edmonton performances. He is also a regular performer at the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, and was Artist-in-Residence at the University of Alberta for a number of years, with a large number of students who have gone on to be scholarship students at schools such as Juilliard, Yale, Rice and McGill Universities.

A student of Felix Galimir, Piotr Milewski and Samuel Rhodes, Martin Riseley obtained his doctorate from Juilliard under Dorothy Delay. He spent the 2002/03 season as the Interim Associate Concertmaster with the National Arts Centre Orchestra and was Guest Concertmaster of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra on a tour this summer with cellist Lynn Harrell and conductor Matthias Bamert.

Colin Ryan graduated from McGill University in Montreal and continued his studies in the United States and in Europe. He was the Principal Cellist of the New Chamber Orchestra of Canada in Toronto before joining the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in the same capacity. He has also performed with the Orford String Quartet, the Pacific Baroque Orchestra in Vancouver and the World Philharmonic Orchestra, an orchestra comprised exclusively of principal players of orchestras from around the world. He has appeared as soloist with the Edmonton Symphony, the Alberta Baroque Ensemble, and other chamber orchestras in Edmonton. He has also recorded numerous chamber music and solo recital programmes for CBC Radio and Television. Colin was invited to join the National Arts Centre Orchestra for a summer season as Guest Principal Cellist. Colin also plays baroque cello and viola da gamba and teaches at Alberta College.

Bill Eddins has been playing piano since he was five when his parents bought a Wurlitzer Grand piano at a garage sale. He started conducting during his sophomore year at the Eastman School of Music, and most of the '80s were spent trying to decide whether to pursue a career in conducting or piano. The quandry was answered for him when he realized that the life of a poor, starving pianist was for the birds. In 1989 Bill decided to study conducting with Dan Lewis at the University of Southern California, from whence he managed to land assistant conductor posts with the Chicago Symphony and the Minnesota Orchestra in 1992.

Bill is committed to bringing classical music to the greater public. He has started a podcast – Classical Connections – which is dedicated to exploring the history of classical music and highlights live chamber music performances in which Bill has taken part (check it out for yourself at Bill Eddins' website). He has also produced a solo piano CD – Bad Boys, Volume I – which features Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" Sonata and Albright's Nightmare Fantasy Rag. Bad Boys, Volume II featuring the cello sonatas of Rachmaninoff and Kabalevsky is due out in summer '06.

William Eddins is Music Director of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest conductor of the RTE National Symphony Orchestra (Ireland) in Dublin. A native of Buffalo, N.Y., he currently resides in Minneapolis with his lovely wife Jen, a clarinetist, and their two boys Raef (AKA Raefster; Munchers) and Riley (AKA Squeaky; The Imp; Dr. No).

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2006-2007

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